(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether there is an actual shortage of LPG in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have not stopped release of new LPG connections. New LPG connections are made available as soon as possible and in any case, within a period of sixty days. At present, new LPG connections are available for genuine domestic customers and as on 01.11.2008, there are 1036.9 lakh LPG customers in the country.

OMCs have reported that they have released 25.64 lakh new LPG connections in the country during the period April-October, 2008.

(c) and (d) OMCs have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country and LPG to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has reported backlog in LPG supplies in the States of Kerala, Manipur and Tamil Nadu mainly because of spurt in demand due to the economic blockade in Manipur, transporter agitation and various bandhs in Kerala and heavy rains in most parts of Tamil Nadu including Chennai. Government has advised OMCs to liquidate the backlog in the States by operating the bottling plants on holidays and during extended hours.

Supply of naptha for power generation in Kerala

1672. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are many plants based on Naptha and Low Sulphur High Speed (LSHS) for power generation in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details of above fuels supplied to above plants including price of fuel, excise duty on fuel, quantity of fuel and the actual cost of fuel per unit power generated for the last three years, year-wise, plant-wise, fuel-wise, category-wise;

(c) if so, whether competent authority of Kerala had represented during May, 2007 to provide Naptha and LSHS and for power generation at an affordable price and exempt excise duty Countervailing Duties (CVD) for these fuel for power generation;

(d) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Export of natural gas

†1673. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(a) whether India exports natural gas to some of the countries;

(b) if so, the details of such countries alongwith the details of the companies which are exporting the same;

(c) the details of the gas exported during the last three years, company-wise and country-wise; and

(d) the total foreign exchange earned by the export of natural gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No export of natural gas is made from India.

(b) to (d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

LNG supply to fertilizer companies

1674.SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fertilizer companies like Indian Farmer Fertilizer Cooperative Ltd.(IFFCO) are buying Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from shell at $ 25/MMBTU;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these fertilizer companies are capable to afford such high price for LNG; and

(d) if not, the steps taken by Government to regulate these prices of LNG?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) According to the information available from the Company, no gas at ex-terminal price of US $ 25/mmbtu has been sold to IFFCO or any other fertilizer Company by Hazira LNG Pvt. Ltd.

(b) and (c) Do not arise, in view of (a) above.

(d) LNG is being imported through term-contracts, as also through spot market. Under term contracts, agreement entered into between the buyer and the seller is for a specified period. Price of the same is as per mutually agreed pricing formula. However, price of LNG purchased from spot market depends on the prevailing market conditions.

Government took the decision that the price of Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) procured under term contracts should be non-discriminatory and that a uniform pooled price should be charged from existing and new consumers; accordingly, this Ministry issued orders on March 6, 2007. RLNG procured under term contracts is being supplied on a pooled price basis *w.e.f.* August 29, 2007. The spot LNG procured from the spot market has been kept out of the purview of the above mentioned directive, as there are wide fluctuations and great uncertainty in the price of LNG procured from the spot market.

Out of the total 8.32 million metric tonne (mmt) LNG imported in the country during 2007-08, 5.8 mmt LNG was imported through term contracts, whereas the remaining 2.52 mmt LNG was imported through spot market.